

REMARKS

Objections To the Specification

The Office objected to technical defects in paragraph 22. Those defects are corrected herein.

Claim Objections

The Office objected that claim 1 should refer to the "locking assembly" as the "self-locking release assembly." The applicant disagrees. Unless there are multiple different locking assemblies, there is no need to repeat the qualifiers to the locking assembly. In any event, the suggested amendment is mooted by amending the claim to recite that the operating assembly re-locks the cover, (as suggested by the Office under the claim objections section).

The Office objected that claim 1 should refer to the "trigger" as a "finger-operated trigger." The objection is improper as discussed immediately above, and is in any event mooted by changes to claim 4.

35 USC §112

The Office rejected claims 1-5 on the grounds that claim 1 recited the release assembly re-locking itself. The applicant agrees and has amended the claim as suggested.

35 USC §103

Claims 1-5 were all rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Stevenson (US 4091537) in view of Owens et al. (US 5878501). The Office admits that Stevenson fails to teach the cover covering both the cutting edge of the blade and at least a portion of the side of the blade. The Office maintains, however, that the missing element is satisfied by combination of Stevenson with Owens. As argued earlier, the applicant disagrees with the rejection because the Office has failed to make a prima facie case of obviousness. Applicant re-asserts the same arguments.

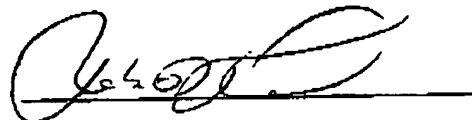
In addition, the applicant has amended claim 1 to recite that the trigger is positioned underside the handle, and is operable in a generally distal to proximal movement. The Owens actuator is not positioned on the underside of the handle, and the Stevenson actuator is not operable in a generally distal to proximal movement. These are significant differences because it is the combination of the two that allow the claimed device to be used in a very natural position, with the blade extending from the handle substantially parallel to the user's forearm, and with the trigger of the tool utilizing a similar motion to a trigger of the handgun. This is the strongest position of the user's hand relative to the forearm, and is achieved by the currently claimed tool, but not by the referenced tools. Applicant added claims 11 and 12 to further claim these distinctions.

Request For Allowance

Claims 1-5, 11 and 12 are pending in this application. The applicants request allowance of all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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